REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the following remarks. Applicants thank the Examiner for carefully considering this reply.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1 and 3-13 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 5 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 1 and 5.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

MPEP §2143 states that "[t]he key to supporting any rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 is the clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious." The Supreme Court in *KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc.*, 127 S.Ct. 1727, 1739, 75 U.S.L.W. 4289 (2007) noted that the analysis supporting a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 should be made explicit. *See*, MPEP §2143.

In particular, the Examiner "must articulate the following: (1) a finding that the prior art included each element claimed, although not necessarily in a single prior art reference, with the only difference between the claimed invention and the prior art being the lack of actual combination of the elements in a single prior art reference; ..." MPEP § 2143(A). Applicants assert that the prior art, whether viewed separately or in combination, fails to teach or suggest all the limitations of the pending independent claims.

Claims 1, 3, 5-7, 9, 10, and 12

Claims 1, 3, 5-7, 9, 10, and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,154,819 ("Larsen") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,177,510 ("Appell"). To the extent that this rejection applies to the amended claims, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a method to control access to a sector of a flash type memory of an electronic module. More specifically, independent claim 1 recites, in part, (i) receiving a write request to write data to an area of the partition, wherein the partition is located within the sector; (ii) making a first determination about whether an owner of the data to be written has write access to the partition of the sector; (iii) making a second determination about whether the owner has permission to erase the entire sector in which the partition is located using a rule, wherein the rule verifies that the write request does not delete data of an owner other than the owner issuing the write request; and (iv) writing the data to the partition when the first determination and the second determination allow the write request to proceed.

Larsen does not disclose making a second determination about whether the owner has permission to erase the entire sector in which the partition is located using a rule, wherein the rule verifies that the write request does not delete data of an owner other than the owner issuing the write request. In contrast, Larsen teaches a block-erase architecture for flash memory, where a block controller unit uses a block controller bit to configure a flash memory block as having a locked/unwritable or unlocked/writable state. See *e.g.*, Larsen column 6, lines 23-32. However, the effect of the Larsen lock mechanism is global to all requesting entities in that, if a block is determined as locked in view of the corresponding block controller bit, all write and erase requests to that block are refused; as such, Larsen, in allowing or refusing write or erase access, relies on a

block controller bit and makes no controlling distinction on the basis of the <u>owner</u> of the data to be written. See *e.g.,* Larsen column 4, lines 47-67 and Larsen column 6, lines 23-32. Accordingly, Larsen fails to teach or suggest all the limitations of independent claim 1.

Moreover, Appell does not teach or suggest that which Larsen lacks. Specifically, Appell teaches segmenting hardware/firmware address space, such that access to a segment is granted on the basis of a comparison between the assigned privilege of a process owning the data in the segment and the assigned privilege of a process seeking access to the segment; hence, under Appell, the data belonging to a lesser-privileged process can be appropriated by a higher-privileged process. See *e.g.,* Appell column 10, lines 18-48. Accordingly, because Appell uses an assigned privilege scheme that would allow a higher-privileged process to erase or write the data belonging to a lesser-privileged process, <u>Appell does not make an access-granting determination using a rule that verifies that the write request does not delete data of an owner other than the owner issuing the write request.</u>

In view of the above, independent claim 1 is patentable over Larsen and Appell. Further, claim 5 includes at least the same patentable limitations as independent claim 1 and accordingly, claim 5 is patentable over claim Larsen and Appell for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to independent claim 1. Dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 4, 11, and 13

Claims 4, 11, and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over Larsen and Appell in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,401,160 ("See"). To the extent that this rejection applies to the amended claims, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 4 and 13 depend from independent claim 1 and claim 11 depends from independent claims 5. As discussed above, Larsen and Appell fail to teach or suggest all the limitations of independent claim 1 and 5. Further, See does not teach or suggest that which Larsen and Appell lack. This is evidenced by the fact that See is merely relied upon to teach "wherein the partition is associated with a status, wherein the status is one selected from the group consisting of erasable, blank, and not blank" (see Office Action mailed July 9, 2008, pp. 7-8).

In view of the above, independent claims 1 and 5 are patentable over Larsen and Appell in view of See. Dependent claims 4, 11, and 13 are patentable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 8

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over Larsen and Appell in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 7,177,975 ("Toombs"). To the extent that this rejection applies to claim 8, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 8 includes at least the same patentable limitations as independent claim 5. Accordingly, claim 8 is patentable over the Larsen and Appell for at least the same reasons as independent claim 8. Further, Toombs fails to teach or suggest that which Larsen and Appell lack.

This is evidenced by the fact that Toombs is merely relied upon to teach "a card" (see Office Action mailed July 9, 2008, pp. 8-9).

In view of the above, independent claim 5 is patentable over Larsen and Appell in view of Toombs. Dependent claim 8 is patentable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicants believe this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 09669/086001).

Dated: September 9, 2008   Respectfully submitted,

By____/Jonathan P. Osha/_____
      Jonathan P. Osha
      Registration No.: 33,986
      OSHA · LIANG LLP
      1221 McKinney St., Suite 2800
      Houston, Texas 77010
      (713) 228-8600
      (713) 228-8778 (Fax)
      Attorney for Applicants